

# ICD-10 Excludes1 Note and Coding Guidelines

## What is an ICD-10 Excludes1 note?

The official coding guidelines explain<sup>1</sup>: An Excludes1 note indicates that the code excluded should never be used at the same time as the code above the Excludes1 note. An Excludes1 note is applicable when two conditions or encounters cannot be used together.

## ICD-10 Excludes1 note and coding guidelines

An ICD-10 Excludes1 note is also referred to as mutually exclusive. The list of scenarios below demonstrates this concept.

Scenario	Exclusion	Rationale
Specific condition with signs and symptoms of the same condition	R87.612 Low grade squamous intraepithelial lesion on cytologic smear of cervix (LGSIL) should not be reported with N87.0 Mild cervical dysplasia. Based on the Excludes1 note, these two codes cannot be reported together.	Codes describing symptoms and signs are only acceptable for reporting when the provider has not established a related definitive diagnosis.
Conditions that indicate both a complicated and a normal pregnancy in the same patient.	O09.891 Supervision of other high-risk pregnancies, first trimester should not be reported with Z34.81 Encounter for supervision of other normal pregnancy, first trimester. Based on the Excludes1 note, these two codes cannot be reported together.	Patients cannot have both a normal and a complicated pregnancy occurring at the same time.
Coding for screenings that are included as part of an examination.	Z12.4 Encounter for screening for malignant neoplasm of cervix is excluded for use with Z01.419 Encounter for gynecological examination (general) (routine) without abnormal findings. Based on the Excludes1 note, these two codes cannot be reported together.	A screening code is not necessary if the screening is inherent to a routine examination, such as a pap smear done during a routine pelvic examination. <sup>2</sup>

## Where to find more information?

ICD-10-CM Official Guidelines for Coding and Reporting are updated semi-annually and provide additional details about Excludes1 notes. Follow the link below for additional guidance.

<https://www.cms.gov/files/document/fy-2026-icd-10-cm-coding-guidelines.pdf>

To research specific ICD-10-CM codes and conditions, enter the code or condition at the following link and locate the red prohibited 1 symbol (🚫) for the exclusion note and references. <https://icd10cmtool.cdc.gov/?fy=FY2025>

### References

1. ICD-10-CM Official Guidelines for Coding and Reporting. CMS.gov. Updated October 1, 2025. Accessed September 8, 2025.
2. National Center for Health Statistics - ICD-10-CM. CDC.gov. Accessed September 8, 2025.